



SPM NEWSLETTER

St. Petersburg Masters | North Shore Aquatic Complex



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2023 Splashes Off!

Off and running, 2023 began teeming with pool, open water and social events. Frogman, the hour swim started us off in January ... and the season took off with the Gulf Coast Games, the Valentine's Day Meet, InfinityMan ... and kept going through March, with alternating pool and OWS events, including our annual Bob Beach Championship! Did anyone come up for a breath? And now the team is preparing for Y Nationals in Ft. Lauderdale followed by the USMS Nationals in Irvine, CA, and in the planning phase for Summer Nationals in Sarasota. Lots of muscle flexing in 2023 so far, and quite literally too. Check out the meet photos by Sarah and Gloria.

When the team wasn't competing in the water, the social committee had some awesome monthly activities planned for us including shuffleboard and ... axe throwing! The 2022 swimming season concluded with the annual awards banquet at Bayfront Towers.

We welcomed members of the SPM community with the birth of Savannah Sigley, and the wedding of Sara and Bryan. And very sadly, we said goodbye to longtime member and friend Barbara Prescott.

Thanks to everyone who helped with this issue: Gary Bastie, Brooke Bowman, Dawn Clark, Stephanie Gibson, Andrew Leone, Regina Novak, Kathy Selles, Mike Smith, Paula Texel, Karen Westerman, and Mike Zabel for their spirited, informative, and inspirational articles and wonderful photos. Very special thank yous to Sarah Swoch and Gloria Smith for all their dedication in documenting the team in photos and recruiting other contributors to the newsletter. It's a real treat to check my messages or email and see pictures, updates, and articles. You'll notice that Sarah was very prolific in her writing too! Please send content ideas to me (livia.zien@gmail.com).

Don't forget, there is an Instagram account [stpetemastersswim](#) and a [Facebook page](#) with current information and events for the team.

Happy swimming!

Upcoming Pool Events

Apr. 20-23 / SCY: YMCA Masters National Championships. Ft. Lauderdale FL. [Information & entry](#) (must by a Y member to enter).

Apr. 27-30 / SCY: USMS Spring Nationals. Irvine, California. [Information & entry](#).

May 6 / SCY: Coral Springs Last Chance SCY Meet. Coral Springs, FL.

May 20 / LCM: ART Spring Splash. Atlanta GA. [Information and online entry](#) | [paper entry](#). Entry deadline: paper entries received by Friday, May 12; online entry closes Monday, May 15

July 8-9 / LCM: St. Pete Masters Long Course Championships. St. Petersburg FL

Swim Meets Schwimm Meets, Eh?

By Gary Bastie

Well, it's that time again. It's time for a quick article regarding why we swim in meets. I don't know if you remember the 3 F's from the old Masters' Days but they were "Fun, Fitness, and Friendship". That's how the organization began, and it was right on target. A lot of us have had the 3 R's on a regular and ongoing basis. But this article's not for those who already swim in meets. It's for those who don't. Let me explain.

There are good reasons why swim meets are helpful, and I'll list but a few of them.

1. They get us out of our comfort zone approach to life and swimming. If we're going to swim in a meet, might as well do our best, right?
2. They show us our weaknesses as well as our strengths. And, unless you know yours, you won't know what to work on or capitalize on.
3. They're a lot of fun. Just ask anyone who swam in the last one. Our meet was a blast.
4. They help focus your practices on real events.
5. They help practices become more meaningful and less boring.
6. If you have a talent, why not use it. If not, why not get even by showing others?
7. We can always use more competitors. Why? It's easier to swim with others. That's why we practice in groups. On those days you don't want to, there's always someone there who's excited to swim and that's infectious.
8. We have a world-class facility.
9. We have some of the best workouts for Masters on earth and I'm not kidding. I get to speak with our visitors and that's what they've told me.
10. We have some of the best workout times on the planet. I just read where nearly 400 pools in the U.K. have closed down in the last 10 years, and here we have a great facility in which to train. For what? Meets, open water swims, triathlons, you name it.
11. We have one of the best teams in the U.S., if not the world. According to the 2018 Pan Am Games in Orlando, we were as good as any large nation, including Brazil.
12. While you might not win, it's good to compete. It helps your outlook on the sport of swimming by helping focus your talents in the direction they already lean. There's an event for everyone.



I hope to see some of our newer swimmers and even some of our older ones at Nationals this summer in Sarasota. It's not winning or losing, it's being part of a team effort. In fact, 100% of our newer swimmers will swim again in another meet because it was so much fun and fulfilling. Which brings me to another point. Maybe the 3 F's should be actually 4, Fun, Fitness, Friendship, and Fulfillment.

Tips For This Issue

1. When you push off, place one hand over the other, thumb down on the top hand so you can squeeze your ears. That's the most streamlined position you can be in and, since you can push off faster than you swim, it's a freebie.
2. When you flip turn, don't blow your air out. Save it so you can do those dolphin kicks off the wall. If it's a distance swim, just do a dolphin. If it's a sprint, do several but, hold your air. As for water up the nose, just put a little pressure out of your nose so water can't come in. You might even blow a bubble or two but that's it. You'll need that air.
3. When you swim, maybe late breathing is for you. If you breathe in and then exhale immediately, you won't get a second or two to use that air. So, hold your breath a little and breathe out just before you take your next breath.
4. Next time you sprint in practice, see how fast you can rev up your arms and hold your breath a little. You might be able to do no-breather 25's with a little rest but it's usually best to take a few strokes before breathing when you sprint.
5. When you swim distance, breathe often and don't hold your breath. You'll need a steady supply of air in order to keep going.

6. When you push off, keep your head down, squeeze your ears with your arms and remain streamlined. Putting your head up might feel fast but you're just plowing water.
7. When you dive in, I tell swimmers to do at least 5 dolphin kicks before they break out for that first stroke. Might as well get as many free yards as possible and you can usually dolphin kick underwater off a dive, faster than you can swim.
8. Learn to save your legs on fast swims. You'll need 'em during the last half of the race. If you over-kick during the first half, you'll be DOA on the second half.
9. Learn to vary your speed during kick sets. It helps you practice race pace swimming.
10. If you swim open water, learn to swim breaststroke. It's a great way to lift your head to see over the waves and other swimmers and best of all, you need not stop when you sight like that.
11. If you swim open water, practice some eyes out swimming during practice. Sighting shouldn't be only done when racing. With a little practice, you'll get even better at it.
12. And last but not least, why not drop down a group and work on a particular stroke or drill? If you're already a Fine Wine swimmer, pick out some of the sets and work on specific weaknesses rather than trying to blast through the set as usual. Make the practice work for you, not you for the practice, and you'll become a better swimmer.

President's Corner

By Mike Zabel

Good morning from the new Officials Office.

The annual banquet was a smash, thank you to everyone who made this event so wonderful!

Just a brief word to thank Brooke who put on an amazing Bob Beach SCY meet. Seriously we need timers, and more timers. Without timers this meet will never occur. I understand many of you swim the meet but if you don't, please consider volunteering.

As of the time of this writing, the SCY "Y" Nationals are in a week although at the pool we are in LCM Mode. On that note, we have the LCM Meet coming up and of course we need timers!

You may also think about volunteering to become a USMS official. The training is online and easily done.

Please let me know your thoughts about the upcoming 2023 LCM Nationals in Sarasota are welcome now, which gives us time to plan. Please email me your thoughts, grab me on the pool deck or email/call me at captainzabel@gmail.com (301) 943-3443.

Later, Z



Officially official at the Good Life Games
(photo: G. Smith)



Bob Beach Championship (photo: G. Smith)

Pool Competitions

"We did some serious swimming for Valentine's Day LMSC records, PRs, and lots of fun racing," says Sarah Swoch. Among some other firsts, the Valentine's Day meet was Haley Brahm's first USMS meet, Scott Hensley's first as an SPM member. Our Bob Beach Championship was the first USMS meet for Dana Grady and Benjamin Monto, and first as an SPM member for Jesse Morenus and Bill Fallon. Welcome to all our new members!

2023 began with several meets, starting with the Gulf Coast Games for Life and the Clearwater Valentine's Meet in February, followed by our own Bob Beach Championship and the Good Life Games in March. High points were awarded and trophies collected!

Ode to a Meet Director

By Brooke Bowman

I had seen it done many times before.
How hard it could be? A couple hours, maybe more?

Being a meet director is a lot of fun;
Just a couple of days and all is done.

But there is so much more—
Do we have enough timers? Especially for lane 4.

Running a meet is a team affair.
Everything must be done with so much care.

Recruit officials and timers galore ...
At least one per lane, even more!

One can even be the Head Timer
Like Rob Tullman & Pat Dwyer.

Who had an opportunity to run the show,
To tell everyone what to do and what they know!

So, if you are interested, please let Brooke know;
Half day, full day, or two—it takes a lot to put on the show.

One for lane 1, 2, and 3
And you will see

What fun it is to sit behind the blocks
Being part of the meet just rocks!

July 8 and 9 at NSAC pool,
Come join in the fun and be cool!

Brooke Bowman, Meet Director (bowman@law.stetson.edu)

And speaking of pool competitions ...

Enjoy this "Ode to a Meet Director," written by our own Brooke Bowman. Brooke wears multiple hats for our team (Treasurer, Spring and Summer meet director, and now team poet) ... please consider helping out at our summer LCM meet, July 8 and 9. You'll get to meet some fellow teammates outside your lane, time and watch some great races!



USMS Spring Nationals, Irvine

Don't forget to cheer on Bob Beach and Sophia Bickerton as they represent us at the USMS Spring Nationals from April 27-30. Bob will be swimming events #1 Mixed 1650Y Free,

#7 Men 500Y Free, #11 Men 200Y Back, #17 Men 100Y Free, #45 Men 200Y Free. Sophia Bickerton will be swimming #14 Women 50Y Fly, #18 Women 100Y Free, #28 Women 100Y IM, #38 Women 50Y Free, #48 Women 50Y Breast. Check out this [link](#) for updates and streaming.



Summer LCM Nationals will be held from August 2-6 in Sarasota, FL this year - Mark your calendars and save the date! More information can be found [here](#).

Gulf Coast Games for Life (Florida Senior Games)

On February 4, Karen Westerman, Cheryl Kupan, and Paula Texel made the trip to Sarasota to participate in the 2023 Gulf Coast Games for Life.



Karen and Paula (photo: K. Westerman)



Karen, Paula, and Cheryl (photo: K. Westerman)

Unfortunately, Mike Smith was feeling under the

weather and was not able to join, giving the other men in the 65-69 a chance to win. Lots of first place finished for the women, who celebrated after the meet ... Winners, winners, chicken dinners!

Results can be found [here](#).



1st Place Team! (photo: G. Smith)

Clearwater SCY Valentine's Meet

By Paula Texel

One meet we always look forward to each year is the SCY Valentine's Meet, which was held February 11-12 at the Long Center. Twenty-six (26) SPM swimmers swam their "hearts" out all weekend and when the points were tallied at the end of the meet SPM took home the 1st place trophy! SPM finished with 1,640 points, well ahead of the 2nd place team which had 966 points. Nine (9) SPM swimmers took home the large box of chocolates for winning high point in their age groups.

Additionally, four (4) swimmers came in second and two (2) swimmers came in third in their age groups, also taking home some hard-earned chocolate for their efforts.

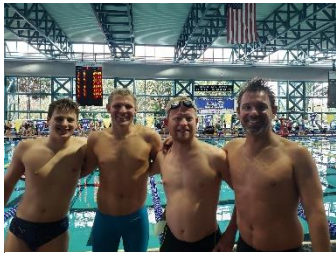
It was great to see so many of our "regular" competitors at the meet, but it was equally fun to watch those who were racing for the very first time. The team came together to show support for each other, and the relays were of course a highlight of the meet for everyone! What a great way to kick off the SCY season – way to go SPM!



Taking turns with the trophy ... Mike, Sarah, Gary, Chris, Russell, Noah, Sherri (photos: G. Smith)



All heart! Alison, Chris, Celeste, Sarah, Allison, Karen, & Paula (photos: S. Swoch) Steve Freeman (photo: S. Swoch) Judge Beach (photo: S. Swoch)



And more relays: Noah, Chris, Russell, Scott, Noelle, Paula, Karen, Tabitha, Scott, Celeste, Chris, Allison (photos: S. Swoch)

Karen, Mike S., Mike Z., Paula (photos: G. Smith)



Sarah, Tabitha, Allison selfie



Relays ... Allison, Mike, Celeste, Russell, Jim ...



Jim, John, Alison, Paula ...



Steve, Mike S., Mike Z., Jim



Steve, Sharon, Judge, Geraldine, Hayley, Alyssa, Allison, Sarah, Judge, Phyllis, Geraldine, Steve ...



Russell, Noah, Alyssa, Hayley (photos: S. Swoch)



Russell, Noah, Alyssa, Hayley (photos: S. Swoch)



Russell, Noah, Alyssa, Hayley (photos: S. Swoch)



Alison, Celeste, Allison, Sarah (photo: G. Smith)



Russell (photo: G. Smith)



Mike Zabel (photo: G. Smith)



Haley Brahm (photo: G. Smith)



Mike Smith (photo: G. Smith)



Tabitha takes off as Paula touches (photo: G. Smith)



Phyllis Scheidt (photo: G. Smith)



Sherri Bogue (photo: G. Smith)



Batman Chris (photo: G. Smith)



Paula Texel (photo: G. Smith)

High point winners (1st place): Noah Manera (18-24), Alyssa Harmon (25-29), Chris Stickle (30-34), Allison Retotar (35-39), Paula Texel (50-54), Karen Westerman (55-59), Jim Esposito (55-59), Mike Zabel (60-64), Bob Beach (90-94); **High point winners (2nd place):** Hayley Brahm (25-29), Celeste Patton (35-39), Russell Hawkins (35-39), Alison Hayden (50-54); **High point winners (3rd place):** Sarah Swoch (35-39), Scott Hensley (40-44). Full results can be found [here](#).



Mellow Mushroom dinner (photo: S. Swoch)

Bob Beach Championship

By Stephanie Gibson



Team photo at Bob Beach Championship meet 2023 (photo: G. Smith)

St Pete masters had nearly 50 swimmers take part in the annual Bob Beach Championship swim meet on March 11-12, 2023. It's always a blast swimming in your home pool! There were some fast swims and lots of smiles! We had some big points from Cheryl Kupan (90), Sarah Swoch (86), and Eric Herman (84). And congratulations to all the SPM High Point winners: Womens 18-24: Sophia Bickerton, Mens 18-24: Noah Manera, Women 25-29: Hayley Brahm, Men 30-34: Christopher Stickle, Women 35-39: Sarah Swoch, Women 50-54: Paula Texel, Men 50-54: Eric Herman, Women 55-59: Cheryl Kupan, Women 60-64: Lisa Flanagan, Men 60-64: Greg Salomon, Women 65-69: Nancy Kiernan, Men 65-69: Kern Davis, and ... Men 90-94: Judge Beach!

SPM took the team title with a combined 2,186 points overall. We are looking forward to hosting the St. Pete Masters Summer Long Course meet in July. Who's joining us for the fun?



Meets are not possible without volunteers and officials! Thank you! (photos: S. Swoch)



Lisa, Sophia, Olivia, Macarena | Geraldine, Pam, Kern, Mike S. | Sophia, Kelly, Chris, Noah | JoAnn, Steve, Claudio, Nancy | Russell, Allison, Sarah, Bill (photos: S. Swoch)



Geraldine, Nancy, JoJo, Pam | Lisa, Phyllis, Sharon, Sherri | Alison, Adam, Sean, Paula | Scott, Eric, Adam, Sean



Sarah Swoch (photo: G. Smith)



Paula Texel (photo: G. Smith)



Steve Freeman (photo: S. Swoch)



Russell (photo: G. Smith)



Macarena



Cheryl



Adam



Kern



(photos: S. Swoch)



Sophia, Sarah, Allison, Hayley



Noah, Chris, Russell, John



Judge, Claudio, Kern, Steve



Cheryl, Alison, Paula, Laura

Results can be found [here](#).

Good Life Games

by Mike Smith

The week following the Bob Beach Championships, a small but mighty contingent of 11 swimmers represented SPM on March 18th, at the Long Center in Clearwater, for the Good Life Games (50+). Typically, the GLG are one of the early season opportunities to compete in Long Course as well as qualify for the Florida Senior Games (FSG) state meet in December.

By the numbers, SPM captured 35 first place swims

and

according to Midnight Sports, a combined total of 12 new GLG records were set by Karen Westerman, Sharon Steinmann, Paula Texel, Alison Hayden, Bob Beach, and Mike Smith.

There were no relay opportunities. Not bad for a couple of hours on a Saturday morning!

As a footnote, the National Senior Games (NSG) meet will be in Pittsburgh, July 14-17 (swimming) 2023; sign-ups are still open. There were 733



John (photo: G. Smith)



Judge (photo: G. Smith)



John, Paula, Karen (photo: G. Smith)



Cheryl (photo: G. Smith)

swimmers (50+) at the 2022 NSG. This year’s NSG swimming competition will be held at the University of Pittsburgh. Overall, this NSG event will complete two consecutive years due to the Covid pandemic and gets the games back on track. Otherwise, the NSG are held every two years (qualify in even years for NSG in odd years), meaning the next NSG after Pittsburgh will be in 2025.

ePostals

Hour Swim

By Sarah Swoch



Megan and Celeste (photo: S. Swoch)

The 2023 Hour Swim is official. SPM is the medium size team CHAMPION! We had 38 swimmers complete 154,040 yards, beating out Oregon Masters who had 41 swimmers swimming 150,395 yards. The team pulled together to time and count for each other, led by Kathy Selles’ organization of the Fine Wine Group. The weather was gorgeous on

Medium Club			
1	SPM	154040	38
2	OREG	150395	41
3	DAM	134115	38
4	IM	127995	35
5	BSMT	112685	35
6	PBM	111640	30
7	MOST	111605	32
8	AAMAH	92875	30
9	MVM	67450	22

First place finish! (photo: S. Swoch)

our team day where we also celebrated Stephanie Gibson’s Birthday. In true virtual swim form, Kevin Schutz, Christine Swanson, and Anne Page sent in their counts from Wisconsin and North Carolina. Celeste, Megan, and Jesse even did their hour starting at 5:30 a.m. one morning. Baz and Sharmaine Owen were visiting from the UK at just the right time to join us too. With participation nearly quadrupling from last year we were able to put together 3 All American relays and 16 Top Ten relays. That full taper Fred wrote for us paid off. Individual All Americans were Chelsea Nauta (35-39) 5,370, Paula Texel (50-54) 4,815, and Jesse Morenus (40-44) 5,015. Our 25+ mixed relay champions were Paula Texel, Chelsea Nauta, Noah Manera, and Chris Stickle. The 35+ women’s relay champions were Chelsea Nauta, Paula Texel and Sarah Swoch and the 25+ men’s champions were Christopher Stickle, Jesse Morenus, and Noah Manera. That makes for 6 All American swimmers and 30 Top Ten swimmers, and it’s only January. Stay tuned for more information on the next Virtual Event, the 5K/10K, which runs from May 15th to September 15th.

Complete results can be found [here](#).



(photos: S. Swoch)

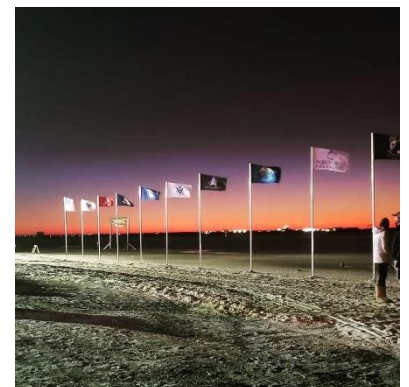


Open Water Swimming

Frogman Swim

By Kathy Selles and Dawn Clark

Frogman Swim 2023 will be another good one for the record books. This will be the thirteenth event for this swim, and the 12th time Dawn and I have participated as a team. I left home at 5:00am, and note that the car thermometer reads 38 degrees. The forecast had given hope that this cold front would have passed on by and seas would be calm, but it was not to be.



(photo: K. Selles)

Gandy Beach is already a flurry of activity. Flags are set up and whipping in the north wind. Numerous volunteers are already here to direct traffic and help us drop off kayaks and gear, others help with check-in, timing chips, snacks and coffee. If all this is set up when I arrive at 5:30 am, what time did all these people start?! The familiar equipment is all here – the jumbotron, kayak corrals set up, spotlights, orange cones, and most sobering: large placards set up on the beach with photos of Navy SEALs killed in action. This is why we do this every year, helping to provide support to injured Navy SEALs, and to honor the memory of those who lost their lives.



Kathy, Dawn, Sarah, Kern (photo: K. Selles)

The mission of Tampa Bay Frogman Swim is as follows:

The Tampa Bay Frogman Swim strives to build national awareness of the Naval Special Warfare community and support the Navy SEAL Foundation whose mission is to provide immediate and ongoing support and assistance to the Naval Special Warfare community and their families.

The swim presents a challenging endeavor to provide a small reminder of the hardships endured by our elite and silent warriors while encouraging others to support and donate to the cause.

Dawn and I connect quickly, and find other SPM swimmers here including Chris, Kern Davis, and Sarah Swoch doing kayak support. Pat Marzulli is also entered to swim. The crowd has swollen to include 150 swimmers and 150 kayakers - one for each swimmer, in addition to friends, families, and Gold Star families. Motorboats and jet skis are offshore waiting to accompany the swimmers across the bay. After the formal opening ceremonies, the announcer reads off the names of those KIA/KIT, another very sobering moment. Around 8 am parachutists soar down from the sky and land squarely on the X placed on the beach. Kayakers are already in the water. A group of former Navy SEALs begins; they are fully equipped with gear they would have used on a mission and will swim with this gear to the finish. Wave 1 starts around 8:20 am.

The water is definitely rough this morning due to the steady north wind. Dawn gets a strong start after a brief readjustment of the wet suit. She swims with a steady stroke that doesn't seem to waver. I have to keep a close watch on the waves and water to maintain trajectory and pace; the wind keeps a constant pull on the kayak.



A family event, Kern swims for Brian Bill (photo: Ria McQueen)

The field of swimmers spreads out as each person finds their own pace and settles in for the 3.5 mile swim. The cold water and rough conditions cause a few swimmers to quit. Thanks to good organization and information, kayakers have pre-established signals to call for help.

We proceed on to the American Legion on the east side of Tampa Bay. A nice crowd is waiting and applauds as swimmers finish. Dawn's time was under 2 hours.

Assistants are available for both swimmers and kayakers to help exit the water and getting kayaks pulled out.

Dawn finds her way to the warming tent to change clothes and dry off. Many of the finishers are shivering uncontrollably but not Dawn. She still seems energetic and ready for more swimming! We all manage to find a snack and take time for photos.



Kathy and Dawn (photo: K. Selles)

After a rest break here, I will join fellow kayakers and paddle back to the start. The wind has died down and the bay is flat. Most of the swimmers have finished. It is now a great time to cruise on Tampa Bay.

In 2022, the Tampa Bay Frogman Swim raised \$935,000. Please consider [donating](#) to this well-regarded charity organization.



Pre-swim group picture (photo: L. Briceno)

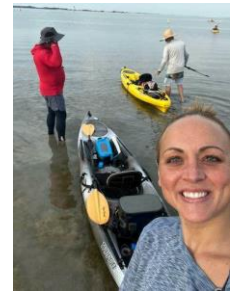
InfinityMan Invitational Redux 2023 ("The Hardest Swim You've Never Heard Of")

By Andrew Leone

On February 25, 2023 I was invited to swim in the InfinityMan Swim. This is a figure eight swim around Honeymoon Island in Dunedin and Three Rooker Island. Ten swimmers arrived on a sunny warm Florida spring Saturday to meet up with their kayakers on the Dunedin Causeway. I was honored to be invited to this

swim with several Triple Crown Open Water Swimmers and a fellow swimmer who has done double crossings of all three Triple Crown Swims. Chelsea Nauta, the overall winner of the swim crushed it out there!

The swim was approximately 22 miles, English Channel rules no neoprene, no tech suits, no GPS watches etc. Each swimmer had a personal kayaker and there were several motorboats and one Jet Ski for support. Kareem Kirby was my kayaker and did an outstanding job.



Overall winner
(photo: C. Nauta)



Andy, Sarah, Rob, Chelsea, and Rich (photo: S. Swoch)

Timing of the swim was timed with incoming tide through the Hurricane Pass (South end of Honeymoon Island) then heading north up the bay and then North along Three Rooker Island. From the recent storms, Three Rooker sustained substantial erosion and there is a south part separated from a very small north part. The wind was about 9 knots out of the NW when we started heading North at Three Rooker. This was an incredibly challenging portion of the swim that seemed to last forever. I could see the shallow sandy bottom with shells and could tell how little progress that I was making. Also, about this same time a large wave went over the side of

my kayak and the boat began sinking. Kareem had brought a handheld bilge pump but there was too much water. He had to go to edge of Three Rookers beach and tip the kayak to empty the water out. I was thus left without a kayaker.



(photo: A. Leone)

Shelley was with me at that point and was gracious enough to share her husband Derek's kayak with me until Kareem could rejoin me. Without the kayak it was nearly impossible to tell where to head with the current, water swirls, and wind. Kareem was able to join me, and we finished in a little over 8 hours, approximately 13.5 miles done.



Hi Chelsea! (photo: C. Nauta)

This was the longest swim of my life for both time (2 hours longer than anything before and 1 mile longer than my previous longest). Thanks to SPM for pushing me to swim faster and better. Thanks to OWS Leo for all his support and encouragement. Thanks to Kareem and all the support that made this swim possible. Thanks to Serbo and Magoo for the invitation and believing that I could finish this!

What's next for me? Not sure. But if you see me swimming a little bit slower over the next few weeks you will know why!

Sand Key Open Water Swim Series, March 4

By Sarah Swoch

The Sand Key Open Water Series was nearly canceled by Red Tide blowing in from the south. But open water swimmers know they have to do a little sleuthing to find the right place on the right day. OWS Leo had hoped the race would happen



Megan, Sarah, Stephanie, Andrew
(photo: S. Swoch)



1st Place Woman 5k, Sarah Swoch
(photo: S. Swoch)



Post swim group picture! (photo: S. Swoch)



1st Place Woman 2.4 mile,
Stephanie (photo: S. Swoch)

and showed up early with Andrew Leone to do some reconnaissance. The beach side looked like a horror show with Portuguese-man-of-war jellyfish washed up alongside eyeless fish. The Intercoastal Waterway was pretty clear though. So it was settled that Leo would drive us 5Kers up to the Belleair Bridge and we would swim back to Beto the duck at Sand Key Park. It turned out to be a swim with a little push from the wind and tide. You could almost surf from time to time. Kareem Kirby was out on a jet ski to accompany us and ward off boat traffic. However, we were all able to finish well before there were many boats to be concerned about. Sarah Swoch was the first-place woman in the 5K with Megan Howson close behind. If only we could see all the buoys, it would have been a tie. Andrew Leone also completed the 5K. Stephanie Gibson was the first-place woman in the 2.4-mile swim. The 2.4-mile course was a loop, so it was probably the bigger challenge, requiring swimmers to swim against the wind and current for half the race. The second race of the series will be held at Sand Key on May 13th. Sign up [here](#).

Strokes for Hope

By Sarah Swoch



Before the plunge (photo: S. Swoch)

Clara Reynolds is a longtime swimmer turned marathon swimmer who is also the CEO of the [Crisis Center of Tampa Bay](#). To [raise funds](#) for the Crisis Center she organizes a marathon swim around Davis Island. In swimming a marathon is considered anything over 10K. A circumnavigation of Davis Island back to the starting dock on Harbour Island comes in at about 6.3 miles depending on how straight you swim. Helen Wainwright was the first person to swim around Davis Island, back when it was closer to 7 miles around. D. P. Davis paid her \$10,000 in 1925 to do it. Our crew of marathon swimmers were happy to follow in her wake.



Stephanie, Megan, Sarah (photo: S. Swoch)

The people walking their dogs that morning got to see a spectacle of marathon swimmers greasing up and getting ready. [Fox 13](#) was there to talk about the swim and cause. I guess we are just crazy enough to get people's attention.

This was one impressive marathon swim too. In the field we had multiple triple crowners, a few first-time marathon swimmers, a crew of very experienced Davis Island swimmers, and some swimmers making their first circumnavigation of Davis Island. The race directors chose a perfect day. We had the tide with us coming down the inside of the island, a little chop around the southern end and then the wind at our backs all the way past Derek Jeter's house. The water quality report was good, and it was clear enough to see stingrays on the bottom over the sand patches. There are plenty of sights to see as you go from mile to mile around the island. If you'd like to get a unique view of Tampa this swim might be for you. The port, airport, fancy houses, spiderman, downtown and the hospital all kept me plenty entertained for the whole swim.



Megan (photo: S. Swoch)

Our team is full of excellent distance swimmers since we definitely swim the distance at every practice. Our team's experienced Davis Island Marathon Swimmer Stephanie Gibson came in as the first-place woman in 2:58.39 with her Kayaker and husband Bill Berry. Megan Howson was less than a minute behind at 2:58:55 with her kayaker Allison Retotar, her first trip around Davis Island. Sarah Swoch finished her first official open water marathon in 3rd place in 3:00:07 with her kayaker Dominique Lazarre. Can you tell we all swim together? Andrew Leone came in at 3:35.30 in 9th place. He was fully prepared to race with some gels in a float since he's been around this island a few times, but a kayaker came through for him. We had a great time swimming together and meeting new swim friends.



Waves of Change 1 Mile Swim - Fighting Lung Cancer Virtual Fundraiser

Andrea Rogers (Andy), a longtime member of SPM, avid pool and open water swimmer, was recently diagnosed with Stage 4 lung



Andy and Chelsea in Barbados, 2017 (photo: C. Nauta)

cancer. Her daughter Chelsea can be found at most morning practices rallying up the Sharks group.

Leo Briceno has organized a fundraiser event, a virtual 1-mile swim running between Sunday, Apr 23, 2023 12:00 AM – Saturday, Jun 3, 2023 11:00 PM. Sign up [here](#) to participate and contribute. All proceeds will go directly to Andy.

The event will also coincide at two physical locations of the [Inaugural Run Swim Run Series](#): On Sunday, April 23, Sand Key Park and on Saturday, Jun 3 at Madeira Beach. Proceeds from the 1-mile time trial will also go directly to Andy. Please keep Andy and her family in your thoughts and share your support in her courageous fight.

Upcoming OWS Events

May 20: Doc Lucky's Golden Mile Swim (1-mile, 2.4-miles, 6.2-miles) Orlando FL. [Information & registration](#). Entry deadline: entry closes Tuesday, May 16. USMS sanctioned: NO

May 20: AMI Hogfish Swim (1.2-miles, 2.4-miles) Anna Maria Island FL. [Information & registration](#). Entry deadline: online entry closes Friday, May 19. USMS sanctioned: NO

Aug. 6: Mermaid Open Water Swim (1/2-mile, 1-mile, 2-miles). Boca Raton FL. [Information & registration](#). USMS sanctioned: NO

Aug. 20: Swim Hobbs Island (1-mile, 2-miles, 5-miles). Huntsville AL. [Information & registration](#). USMS sanctioned: yes

Sept. 9: Swim for Alligator Lighthouse (8-miles). Islamorada FL. [Information & registration](#) USMS sanctioned: NO

Socials!



Annual awards banquet at Bayfront Towers (photo: G. Smith)

Which SPM traveled the farthest to play Shuffleboard? Is it safe to give a swimmer an axe? Does Bayfront Towers have the best view of St. Pete? These and other burning questions were answered at the various socials over the past few months.



Chris & Megan - (photo: S. Swoch)



Sarah (photo: G. Smith)



Daytime view from Bayfront Towers (photo: G. Smith)



Chris Swanson, longtime member of SPM who now lives in Durham, NC, joined in the Shuffleboard fun on a warm January evening.

Axe-wielding swimmers? Is that a good thing? The husband-wife team of Kathy and Carl Selles weren't afraid to show a little healthy competition.

Certainly, our president Mike Zabel would think so too. He walked away the overall winner, awarded the axe-throwing 'trophy' designed by Eric Herman. Congratulations, Mike! No axe to grind there.

And finally, the annual awards banquet was held at the end of March to recognize the hard work and accomplishments of the year. Emceed by Sarah Swoch, handfuls of All-American and Top Ten awards were given out. Each recipient went



Carl looks on as Kathy throws (photo: M. Zabel)



home with a neoprene lunch tote. Lots of raffle prizes were given out too. A delicious dinner spread from Mazarro's was enjoyed by all. Thanks to Bob Beach who, every year, graciously provides us with the most beautiful views of St. Pete at Bayfront Towers, and to those



The axe crew (photo: M. Zabel)



Mike takes home the trophy (photo: M. Zabel)



All Americans (photo: G. Smith)



Top Ten (photo: G. Smith)



Kathy and Carl



Chris and Traci



Jon and Bob



Paula, Karen, Russ



Celeste, Megan



Andy, Chelsea, Rich



Celeste and Paul



Susan and Peter



Susan and Peter



Noelle, Ananda, Kathy



Ken and Tabitha



Cheryl and Judge



Chris and Sarah

who worked and organized to make the event a fun success for all! Enjoy the wonderful images were captured by Gloria Smith.

Megan Howson and the social committee have been working hard to make sure the team that swims together, plays together! Thank you for all your creative planning! Upcoming socials include the Peddle Pub Social on Friday, April 28 (<https://www.facebook.com/events/148884431452603>) ... stay tuned for more events.

Find Ways to Win

by Regina Novak

How would you define winning?

In our sport, we can find multiple ways to win:

- Literally win the race by coming in first.
- Finish somewhere amongst the pack, but you swam your personal best time.
- Regardless of the time, regardless of the finish, we can recognize we swam a great race.



What it takes to get a win is the small and consistent things we do day in and day out.

It's showing up, despite wanting to sleep in. It's showing up even after you've been up all night with a sick kid. It's showing up when you don't feel your best, but you know that swimming is what's good for you today.

Winning after all is not just about competing.

Winning is getting back in the water after a challenge has kept you away. Winning is learning something new that will help your stroke. Winning is welcoming a new person to our team who doesn't think they belong in a Masters swim program. Winning is being there to cheer on a teammate and walk alongside them during a tough challenge. Winning is embracing someone and letting them know they are important and cared for.

I am fortunate right now to have two really incredible physical therapists on my team that are helping me walk through this current chapter. One of them expects me to share my wins at our sessions. He told me that I need to stop judging myself on what Regina used to be able to do and to focus on what I am going to do right now, every day, to eventually get back there.

How will you win today? How will you help someone else celebrate a win today?

One more from Coach Gary: Got Pain?

Maybe these tips might help. If you have various types of pain that affect your swimming, sleep, or personal life, then here's a list of possible suspects.

If you have shoulder pain, sometimes it's caused by movements we do without thinking. For instance, if you sit resting your elbows on a chair's arms, you might be jamming your shoulders.

If you sit at a computer and must keep your elbow elevated by use of shoulder muscles, that's another no-no. It's better to elevate your chair so your arm falls below the shoulder, and you need not 'hold it up' to use the mouse or to type.

Some people do open turns, always using the same hand on the wall. Since the shoulder is the fulcrum, it often gets over-used, especially if you do over 100 lengths at a time.

Some of us like to hang our arm out the car's window with our elbow elevated. That too can harm your shoulder. It's the same with hanging on the wall or with your arm over a lane line. Same type of movement.

Then there's our lower back. Some of the causes for lower back pain that I've noted in myself were, old and saggy mattress, doing flip turns but twisting on the wall (also can harm knees), bouncing movements in the weight room, sitting on an old saggy chair or car seat, and so on.

The point is, evaluate what movements you do each day, and you'll often find the cause of many of your aches and pains. Sometimes it's obvious while other pains can be caused by a dog jerking against the lease. So, enjoy your favorite beverage, sit back, and think about what might have caused that pain. If you come up with the cause, then finding the solution is much easier.

Outside Lanes

Wedding Bells for Sara and Bryan



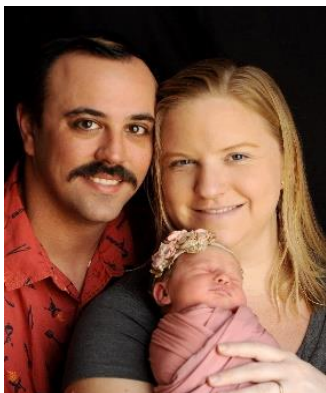
(photo: S. Wolski)

Congratulations to Sara Wolski and Bryan Dzenkowski! They tied the knot on February 12, 2023, celebrating at Urban Stillhouse, followed by an adventurous and culinary-filled honeymoon in Lisbon, Portugal and Marrakech in the Kingdom of Morocco. The couple first met 11 years ago at a Halloween party. Bryan dressed as a Viking and Sara as a flamenco dancer – obviously, a perfect match! They reconnected and started dating when Bryan moved back to the area ... and he popped the question on their trip to Lake Tahoe. Wishing the happy couple love and happiness in all the years to come ...



Honeymoon in Portugal (photo: S. Wolski)

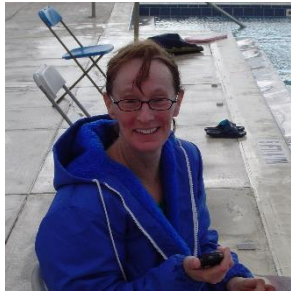
Welcome Savannah!



Donnie, Tori, and Savannah



Welcome to the newest member of our SPM family, and congratulations to proud parents Tori and Donnie Sigley! Savannah Irene was born on March 29 at 12:38am. Tori writes, "Our world forever changed, and my heart grew in ways I didn't know possible. Savannah Irene was born 7lb 4oz and 19" long, and perfect in every conceivable way. We are head over heels in love with her!" Next question is ... have you scheduled her first swim lesson yet? Sending a heartfelt welcome to Savannah!



Barbara Prescott 1950–2023

By Livia Zien

It is with the heaviest of hearts I share the news of Barbara Prescott's passing. We lost our dear friend and SPM teammate

on the morning of March 1, 2023, unexpectedly and much too soon. She was 72. She was born in Natick, MA, and grew up in Manitowoc, WI. She was a gifted and accomplished musician, flutist and professor in the music community. She earned her Bachelor of Music Performance degree from the University of Wisconsin, Madison. In her graduate studies with Donald Peck, she was principal flute in the Civic Orchestra of Chicago before moving to Florida in the 1970's to join The Florida Orchestra. Later, she became a professor of music and flute, teaching at Eckerd College, St. Petersburg College, the University of Tampa, and the Pinellas County Center for the Arts and private lessons, where her students flourished.

A fixture at morning practices for over 3 decades, Barbara swam with the Triathlete group, and later "The Editors", as Brooke Bowman explains. She served on the Board during Harold Ferris' tenure as SPM president. A post-practice breakfast faithful, she was a "Breakfast Club" founder, from Café Mozart (before it was Café Mozart), to Einstein's Bagels, to Panera even prior to the opening of the 4th Street N location. An advocate for all creatures, but especially dogs, she was told by her vet that her dogs had won the lottery.

Barbara's spheres were abundant and varied, touching so many lives in her unique ways. She was a friend ... whose insights, perspectives, and love, were limitless. She will be deeply missed by those who had the privilege of knowing her, but she will continue to live on in our hearts and memories.

On March 27, a [memorial concert](#) in her honor was organized by Joan Epstein of Eckerd College and Nathan Muehl of SPC. The program included performances by several of her longtime colleagues and concluded with a flute choir consisting of over 30 of her students. Her brother, Frank Prescott, shared the poem "[Epitaph](#)" by Merrit Malloy. Other tributes include a remembrance [Facebook page](#), Nathan Muehl's [tribute](#), and her [obituary](#). Donations in her honor can be made to [Safe Paws Rescue](#), Cat Lovers, Inc.: 2105 S. Manhattan Ave., Tampa, FL 33629, [Friends of Strays](#), or [Pet Pal Animal Shelter](#).

A Tribute from "The Editors"

by Brooke Bowman

Barbara, you will not be forgotten, as you will live on in our swimming hearts:

Seven and nine are such odd numbers.

Sets of 25s can be forgotten.

Warmups should be at least 1,000.

Solving world peace are what kick sets are for.

Don't like a practice—EDIT some more!

Keep your heart full of music and love.

Love all mankind and those with furry paws!

Just keep swimming and smiling, our dear friend.

We will not forget you, your dear editors until the end!

SPM Officers

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